

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
Division of Health Care Financing
1 W. Wilson St.
Madison WI 53702

To: Food Stamp Handbook Holders

From: Rick Zynda,
Bureau of Income Maintenance Administration

Re: **FS Handbook Release 02-05**

Release Date: September 17, 2002

Effective Date: October 1, 2002

EFFECTIVE DATE

Implement the instructions at application, recertifications, and change, or, if you wish, earlier. The following policy additions or changes are effective 10/01/02, unless otherwise noted. Bold text denotes new text.

POLICY CHANGES

Introduction Unit
Overview

The shelter and Utilities paragraph was re-written to reflect the new policy.

Old Policy: FS groups who pay shelter and utility costs may get shelter and utility deductions. The FS group chooses either a Standard Utility Allowance or actual expenses paid for shelter and utilities. They only get the shelter deduction if their shelter expense exceeds half their income after all other deductions.

New Policy: FS groups who pay shelter and utility costs may get shelter and utility deductions. **The FS group receives a Standard Utility Allowance based on the type(s) of utilities for which they are billed. FS Groups are no longer able to claim actual expenses incurred.** They only get the shelter deduction if their shelter expense exceeds half their income after all other deductions.

Shelter and Utilities
Computation Unit

This Logic Flow chapter was entirely re-written to reflect the new policy mandating the use of utility standards. Actual expenses are no longer allowed to be chosen for deductions.

This new section called ***Authorized Representatives*** was added. Policy here is based on the policy set forth in Operations Memo 01-34. The following subsections were added beneath it:

01.01.03
01.01.03.01
01.01.03.02
01.01.03.03
01.01.03.04
01.01.03.05

Authorized Representatives
FS Payees
AODA Treatment Centers
Designation of Authorized Buyer for EBT
Duties of the AR and Legal Obligation of the Food Unit
IPV's as Authorized Representatives

Old Policy: Do not allow the standard utility allowance for a resident of a qualified group home. Allow actual costs if they are identified separately.

New Policy: Allow the appropriate utility allowance for a resident of a qualified group home if the utilities are identified separately. See 16.08.00 and 18.03.00.

04.03.00

This section on alien State Option Food Stamp Program has changed:

Old Policy: On November 1, 1998, some aliens receiving FS under the SOFSP will move to the federal FS program. As long as status codes, dates of entry, and birth dates are entered correctly workers do not need to take any action to effect this transfer. Apply the 5 year limitation before 11/1/98, and the 7 year limitation on or after 11/1/98.

New Policy: On November 1, 1998, some aliens receiving FS under the SOFSP were moved to the federal FS program.

Effective October 1, 2002, qualified aliens who are otherwise eligible and who are receiving disability benefits regardless of date of entry are eligible for the federal FS Program. As long as status codes, dates of entry, and birth dates are entered correctly, workers do not need to take any action to effect this transfer.

05.03.00

This section was clarified to emphasize that providing an SSN to a FS worker is voluntary, but that failure to do so will result in that person being denied for FS and his/her income and assets will be deemed.

Old Policy: If a person required to provide a SSN refuses to provide it, s/he is ineligible. Any group member who does not provide a SSN is ineligible. The only exception is if there is good cause ([05.03.02](#)) for not providing it. Disqualify only the person without the SSN, not the entire FS group.

New Policy: Providing an SSN is voluntary, but if an individual applying for FS refuses to provide an SSN, they will be denied and their income and assets will be deemed to the group. Any group member who does not provide a SSN is ineligible. The only exception is if there is good cause ([05.03.02](#)) for not providing it. Disqualify only the person without the SSN, not the entire FS group.

07.06.05.02

The second paragraph in this section was deleted because it referred to a choice between actual expenses or the standard deduction. All FS groups must use a standard deduction if they have utility expenses.

11.01.00

FS AGs that contain a disabled member will now have an asset limit of \$3,000.

Old Policy: A FS group may not exceed its asset limit and be eligible. The asset limit is:

\$3,000 when at least 1 group member is 60 or older.
\$2,000 for all other groups.

New Policy: A FS group may not exceed its asset limit and be eligible. The asset limit is:

\$3,000 when at least 1 group member is **disabled or** 60 or older.
\$2,000 for all other groups.

12.02.02 The last paragraph of this section on HUD and FHMA payments was deleted because it is no longer correct:

Deleted Policy: If the utility allowance included in the FMHA payment is more than 30% of the household's adjusted income, the landlord must forward the difference to the client. Count the difference as unearned income.

12.02.11 TANF payments such as "Emergency Assistance" were added to this list of nonrecurring lump sums that do not count as income for FS.

New Policy: Types of nonrecurring lump sum payments include:

1. Income tax refunds, rebates, or credits.
2. Retroactive lump sum insurance settlements.
3. Retroactive UC payments.
4. Utility or rental security deposit refunds.
5. Retroactive SS or public assistance payments.
6. Retroactive Caretaker Supplement for Children (C-Supp).
7. **TANF payments made to divert a family from becoming dependent on welfare, such as Emergency Assistance.**

12.02.23 The sentence "SSI is not considered a means tested program for these requirements" was deleted for clarity.

12.02.33 This section on SSI was updated to avoid confusion.

Old Policy: Count net SSI income always. SSI is not considered a means tested program for these requirements and there are no work or school attendance requirements for this program. See 12.02.11 for information on SSI lump sum payments.

New Policy: Count net SSI income always. See 12.02.11 for information on SSI lump sum payments.

13.05.03.02 **Old Policy:** If the group deducts a percentage of its utility expenses on taxes, it may choose the SUA or actual costs. It may deduct only the portion of utility expenses it has not claimed on taxes if using the actual costs.

If the FS group claims the total utility costs as a business expense, don't allow any utility deduction.

New Policy: If the group deducts a percentage of its utility expenses on taxes, **it is allowed the full HSUA for the utility expenses. See 16.08.00.** If the FS group claims the total utility costs as a business expense, don't allow any utility deduction.

13.05.03.03 The rates for meal reimbursement for self-employed child care providers increased effective July 1, 2002.

New Rates:

Tier I

Breakfast	\$0.98
Lunch or Supper	\$1.80
Supplement	\$0.53

Tier II

Breakfast	\$0.37
Lunch or Supper	\$1.09
Supplement	\$0.14

15.02.06 This section on deeming utility expenses was re-written. The example was re-written.

Old Policy: Utility Expenses

Go to 15.02.06.01 Actual or 15.02.06.02 Standard.

New Policy: Food units that are billed for utilities should receive a standard utility allowance (16.08.00). Actual utility expenses are no longer allowed. Food units that contain ineligible members may receive a full standard utility allowance if at least one person in the food unit is billed for at least part of utility bill. Utility standards are no longer prorated.

15.02.06.01 This section was deleted because there are no more actual utility expense deductions allowed.

15.02.06.02 This section was deleted and the policy is found in 15.02.06.

15.03.06 **Old Policy:** Shelter expenses either billed to or paid by ineligible members are prorated among all members of the food unit, including all other ineligible (non-contributing) unit members. Add the prorated shares of the eligible food stamp assistance group members together to find the budgeted amount. Don't count the prorated portion for the ineligible member. Do this for shelter costs including rent, actual utilities reported, or when the standard deduction is taken.

The only exception is when only the income of eligible members is to be used to pay the entire amount of the expense. This is regardless of whether there was a bill or who was billed. The food stamp assistance group is entitled to the entire expense.

New Policy: Shelter expenses either billed to or paid by ineligible members are prorated among all members of the food unit, including all other ineligible (non-contributing) unit members. Add the prorated shares of the eligible food stamp assistance group members together to find the budgeted amount. Don't count the prorated portion for the ineligible member. **Do this for shelter costs only but not for utility expenses. See 15.03.06.03 and 16.08.00 for utility expense budgeting for food units with ineligible individuals.**

The only exception is when only the income of eligible members is to be used to pay the entire shelter amount. This is regardless of whether there was a bill or who was billed. The food stamp assistance group is entitled to the entire expense in this case.

15.03.06.02 This example on actual utilities budgeting for food units with ineligible members was deleted and replaced with this text:

New Policy: Food stamp AGs may no longer choose to report actual expenses. If anyone in the food unit is billed for a utility expense, the entire FS AG receives the full utility standard(s). See 16.08.00.

15.03.06.03 The example on prorating utility standards for food units that contain ineligible members was deleted and replaced with this text, and an updated example:

New Policy: Food units that contain an ineligible member may receive a full utility standard if anyone in the food unit is billed for or receives any part of the bill. The utility standards are no longer prorated. See 16.08.00.

16.07.02

This section on Homeless Shelter Deductions was updated with the new policy on utility allowances.

Old Policy: The homeless groups may choose to use one of the following:

- 1) Actual expenses (16.8.0)
- 2) SUA and shelter costs, if eligible for the SUA (16.8.8).

If actual costs are higher, the group may claim actual expenses. If the group chooses actual, you must verify expenses.

If the group chooses the SUA, it may change its choice at each review.

Prorate the SUA for groups containing ineligible members who pay all or part of the shelter costs. If a homeless group shares a residence with another food unit, the other food unit is eligible for a prorated share of the SUA if the homeless group contributes to shelter costs. Use instructions in 16.8.8.

New Policy: The homeless groups may be eligible for a standard utility allowance and shelter costs, if eligible. (16.07.00).

Prorate the SUA for groups containing ineligible members who pay all or part of the shelter costs. If a homeless group shares a residence with another food unit, the other food unit is eligible for a prorated share of the SUA if the homeless group contributes to shelter costs.

Use instructions in 16.08.08.01.

16.08.00

This section was renamed "Utility Allowances," the policy was re-written, and new examples were added.

Old Policy: There are deductions for fuel, utilities, and phone expenses. Expenses are only allowed for the current residence. See 16.8.19 for temporary absence exceptions.

A FS group with fuel and/or utility expenses may choose:
The Heating Standard Utility Allowance (HSUA),
The Other standard,
The Telephone standard, or
Actual expenses

The FS group makes its choice during the interview. The group may change its choice at each review. To change, the group must notify you, verbally or in writing.

New Policy: There are deductions for various utility expenses. Expenses are only allowed for the current residence. See 16.08.19 for temporary absence exceptions.

FS Groups may no longer choose to report actual utility expenses. If eligible, a FS group with utility expenses is allowed one of the following utility standards:

1. **The Heating Standard Utility Allowance (HSUA), if obligated to pay, or actually paying for any heating source.**
2. **The Limited Utility Allowance (LUA), if obligated to pay, or actually paying for two or more of any non-heat qualifying utility expenses. The qualifying utility expenses are phone, water, sewer, electric, cooking fuel, or trash.**
3. **The Electric Utility Allowance (EUA), if obligated to pay, or actually paying for a non-heat electric bill.**
4. **The Cooking Fuel Utility Allowance (FUA), if obligated to pay, or actually paying for a fuel used for cooking that is not also used for a heating source.**
5. **The Water Utility Allowance (WUA), if obligated to pay, or actually paying for a water bill, a sewer bill, septic tank installation or maintenance, or wastewater treatment.**
6. **The Phone Utility Allowance (PUA), if obligated to pay, or actually paying for a telephone.**
7. **The Trash Utility Allowance (TUA), if obligated to pay, or actually paying for a trash or garbage bill.**

The FS group notifies the worker of its utilities and the group will receive the appropriate standard based on their utility bills. See 18.03.00 for the values of these standard utility deductions.

16.08.01	The example was updated, and policy was changed to reflect that utility allowances are no longer prorated if a utility bill is shared with ineligible members.
16.08.02	This subsection regarding the "Other Standard" was deleted because it is obsolete. This section is now marked as "reserved."
16.08.04	This subsection was updated to reflect that FS AGs can no longer choose to report actual expenses as utility deductions.
16.08.05	This subsection was updated to reflect that FS AGs can no longer choose to report actual expenses as utility deductions.
16.08.06	This subsection detailing actual phone expenses was deleted as it is now obsolete. It is now marked as "reserved."
16.08.08.01	This subsection was updated to reflect that FS AGs can no longer choose to report actual expenses as utility deductions.
16.08.08.02	This subsection was updated to reflect that FS AGs can no longer choose to report actual expenses as utility deductions.
16.08.08.03	This subsection was updated to reflect that FS AGs can no longer choose to report actual expenses as utility deductions.
16.08.15.01	This subsection was renamed from SUA to "Self-Employed Utility Allowances." It was updated to reflect that FS AGs can no longer choose to report actual expenses as utility deductions.
16.08.15.02	This subsection regarding actual utility expenses for the self employed was deleted since it is obsolete.
17.01.01	Income limits for 1 and 2 person FS AGs were updated with the new amounts.
17.03.00	This section on denying increases due to fraud was clarified.

Old Policy: No increase in the FS allotment should be made for the duration of the fraud penalty period. If other reductions or changes to the other program's benefits occur during the penalty period, which are unrelated to the fraud, the FS allotment should be adjusted.

New Policy: No increase in the FS allotment should be made for the duration of the fraud penalty period. **This prohibition on increasing benefits follows a person with an IPV who moves to a different food unit.** If other reductions or changes to the other program's benefits occur during the penalty period, which are unrelated to the fraud, the FS allotment should be adjusted.

- 18.01.01 The Net Income Limits were updated. They are effective 10/01/02.
- 18.01.02 The Gross Income Limits were updated. They are effective 10/01/02.
- 18.02.00 The Gross Income Limits for elderly and disabled households were updated. They are effective 10/01/02.
- 18.03.00 The Deduction amounts were updated. They are effective 10/01/02. Note that now the standard deduction varies with AG size. Previously, the standard deduction was set and did not change with the AG size.

The new Utility Standard Allowances were added. The Dependent Care standard did not change from last year.

Standard Deduction	Amount
For AGs with 1-4 people	\$134
For AGs with 5 people	\$147
For AGs with 6 or more people	\$168

Shelter and Utility Deductions	Amount
Shelter Maximum	\$367
HSUA (Heating Standard Utility Allowance)	\$211
LUA (Limited Utility Allowance)	\$125
EUA (Electric Utility Allowance)	\$ 58
PUA (Phone Utility Allowance)	\$ 25
WUA (Water or Sewer Utility Allowance)	\$ 21
TUA (Trash Utility Allowance)	\$ 14
FUA (Cooking Fuel Utility Allowance)	\$ 7

- 18.04.00 The Maximum Food Stamp Allotments were updated. They are effective 10/01/02.
- 18.06.00 The "Allotments by Monthly Net Income and FS Group Size" chart was updated and placed as a pdf on this page.
- 18.07.00 This new subsection was added to show questionable food items that can or cannot be purchased using an EBT card. A link on this page takes you to a pdf document.
- 19.01.00 New policy regarding releasing information on fleeing felons was added to this section:

New Policy: Upon the written request of a local, state, or federal law enforcement officer when a food unit member is fleeing to avoid prosecution or custody for a crime that would be classified as a felony or is violating a condition of probation or parole, you must provide an address, social security number, and if available, the photograph to the law enforcement official. This also applies to other food unit

members who have information necessary for the apprehension or investigation of another member who is fleeing to avoid prosecution or is violating a condition of their parole.

FS agencies must not require that a photo ID be required as a condition of eligibility for FS. You are only to provide a photograph in the above circumstances if the food unit member happened to use a photo ID to verify their identity.

Ch 21.00 all

The Appendix Ch. 21 Applications/Review date was extensively re-written and renamed "Applications/Reviews/Changes." The changes are too numerous to include in the green sheet. Several subsections were re-ordered for clarity. Full policy and procedure for processing FS applications and reviews was included in this chapter. Policy on applications and reviews was not changed, but is now more fully explained.

21.02.00

This subsection on certifications was clarified:

Clarification: A waiver of the FTF interview does not exempt the household from the verification requirements, although special procedures may be used to permit the household to provide verification and thus obtain its benefits in a timely manner, such as substituting a collateral contact in cases where documentary verification would normally be provided. See 22.01.00, 22.07.01, and 22.07.02.

A waiver of the FTF interview may not affect the length of the household's certification period.

21.03.03

This subsection on Strikers was renamed "Reviews for Strikers" for clarity.

21.03.06, 21.03.07 and
21.03.08

These subsections were deleted. 21.03.07 dealt with obsolete review policy. 21.03.06 and 21.03.08 were previously marked as "reserved."

22.01.00

New items were added to this list of verification rules.

New Policy:

6. Verification may be submitted by mail, fax, or through another electronic device, or through an authorized representative.

7. Verification need not be presented in person.

22.02.04

This section on Alien Eligibility Verification was expanded.

Old Policy: See the IMM, Chapter I for verification methods, documents, and sources.

New Policy: See the IMM, Chapter I for verification methods, documents, and sources. **See 25.09 of the Processing Guidelines Appendix 25.01.00 for charts that will help you determine alien eligibility for FS. For detailed INS Policy see the SAVE manual M300 (revised 09-00).**

22.03.04

This subsection was updated to reflect that FS AGs can no longer choose to report actual expenses as utility deductions.

24.02.15

This subsection was updated to reflect that you must enter a "Y" in the notification field on BVCL if you establish a claim so that CARES can apply the repayment to the claim.

24.02.16.01	The chart in this subsection was updated. It is used to determine if EBT benefits should be converted to coupons when the household moves out of Wisconsin. Montana, Nevada and Virginia have implemented EBT statewide and are interoperable. Do not convert EBT benefits to coupons when the household moves to one of these states.
24.02.18.04.05	The Wisconsin Statute relating to FS offenses was changed from 49.127 to 49.795.
24.03.03.01	This subsection was updated to reflect that CEFS added a third status in the EDA status field on the Balance Inquiry screen. This status does not apply to Wisconsin accounts. CEFS also added a service site field to this screen. It identifies the county/tribe number for the case.
24.03.03.06	The alignment of data on the Benefit Grant Inquiry screen example was corrected.
24.03.03.11	Examples on the Card History Inquiry screen were added.
24 Appendix D	The description of the "09" card status code was changed from "Replacement card has been issued" to "system status". The Citicorp system will cancel a card using a 09 status for a number of situations. A replacement card is not always issued.
24 Appendix E	The <i>CARES/CEFS processing steps</i> section was clarified so that the worker first enters the "X" issuance method on AGBI and then confirms the case. The worker who confirmed the case cannot enter information on BIPN.
25.09	The Alien Eligibility chapter of the Processing Guidelines Appendix 25 was re-written and replaced the "reserved" placeholder. This subsection consists of 2 tables that explain how to determine the eligibility of aliens, based on their alien status code and other factors.

**TYPOS, TECHNICAL,
OR HYPERTEXT
LINK CHANGES**

FS Online Handbook Help Text	The Help text has been updated. The search instructions have been corrected and more screen shots were included. The help text is now a pdf document instead of an html page.
Income Test Unit Preface	Links were updated to the correct format.
Review Date Unit Q. 2	A broken link was corrected.
Review Date Unit Q. 4	A broken link was corrected.
01.03.01	The abbreviation for Caretaker Supplement was changed from C-Supp to CTS.
04.02.00	A reference to an Operations Memo in this subsection on Aliens was removed. A link to Appendix Ch.25.09 Alien Eligibility was added.
07.01.01	A typo was corrected in item 4.
12.02.01	A typo was corrected in the example.

12.02.05	<p>This section on Educational Loans was updated to correct a typo and a link.</p> <p><u>Old Policy:</u> See 7.0.0 Count educational loans on which repayment is & Grants deferred.</p> <p><u>New Policy:</u> See 07.03.00 Student Aid.</p>
12.02.07.02	<p>A typo was corrected.</p>
12.02.16	<p>A typo was corrected.</p>
12.02.32	<p>The subsection title "Unearned" was added to the end of "Sick and Severance."</p>
12.02.33.03	<p>A typo was corrected in the last paragraph. SSI-E is coded as "SISE" and not "SISI" in CARES.</p>
12.03.20	<p>A link was updated. The subsection title "Earned" was added after "Sick and Severance."</p>
16.07.00.01	<p>A link to Appendix Ch. 25.13 Reporting Changes was added here.</p>
16.08.03	<p>This subsection was renamed "Verifying Utilities" for clarity.</p>
17.01.00	<p>Links were updated to the correct format.</p>
17.01.01	<p>Links were updated to the correct format.</p>
17.01.02	<p>Links were updated to the correct format.</p>
17.01.03	<p>Links were updated to the correct format.</p>
17.04.00	<p>Links were updated to the correct format.</p>
17.05.00	<p>Links were updated to the correct format.</p>
17.05.01	<p>Links were updated to the correct format.</p>
19.01.01	<p>Links were updated to the correct format.</p>
19.02.02	<p>Links were updated to the correct format.</p>
22.01.00	<p>A typo was corrected.</p>
22.02.02	<p>A link was changed to the new link.</p>
22.03.01.02	<p>A broken link in the assets paragraph to 13.03.01 was fixed.</p>
22.03.04	<p>A link to Appendix Ch. 25.13 Reporting Changes was added here.</p>